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cessible about the early history of the Franciscan Order and its chief members, for the scholarly editions of new texts, and for the indefatigable zeal with which he has labored on even the most minute points.

Histoire de la Marine Française. Vol. II. *La Guerre de Cent Ans; Révolution Maritime.* Par CHARLES DE LA RONCIÈRE. (Paris : Plon, Nourit and Co. 1900. Pp. 560.)

M. DE LA RONCIÈRE'S new volume is devoted mainly to the Hundred Years' War, but with regret it must be said at once that one rises from the perusal of it with little more knowledge of the effect of naval action upon the course of that long struggle than one had when one began. Facts it is true are lavished upon us with a profusion that tells of infinite labor and an unsurpassed enthusiasm for research. But facts and research alone will not make a naval history. Rather for the bulk of readers do they tend by themselves to deepen the obscurity that hangs round an obscure subject. Without some sustained attempt to correlate the apparently disconnected events, to deduce from them some kind of principles, to explain their bearing on the development of naval science, and their general place in the broad progression of the war, such a work sinks to the position of a chronicle. It cannot be called a history. Yet M. de la Roncière almost chokes his subject with ill-digested facts. He spares us nothing, no matter how minute and how little germane to the matter in hand. He can scarcely draw breath for a moment to help us get our bearings, and even when he does his exposition is sometimes far from luminous and not always sound. Nor has he the excuse that his main purpose is to rescue from oblivion the exploits of the French marine. For the greater part of his story is not concerned with the French marine at all, but is devoted to the exploits of Spanish, Italian, and other squadrons hired by the French government or with which French officers or French ships were serving. Not that such matters should not find a place in a history of the French navy, for therein lies its universal interest and importance. As M. de la Roncière himself has so ably pointed out, France throughout the Middle Ages was the focus of the naval art. Every existing influence was brought directly to bear upon its navy and left its mark. To explain the French navy all these influences must be followed and understood. A real history of the French navy would be also a real history of the art of war by sea. Around no other marine could the work be so artistically and logically arranged. But of this broad fact, which in his first volume M. de la Roncière seemed about to handle with so much skill, his grip grows looser as he proceeds and we feel with genuine disappointment that a great opportunity is being missed.

Nor can our reluctant fault-finding stop here. For so far from carrying further our knowledge of the strategy, tactics and material of medieval navies, he leaves it behind the point it has already reached, and even tends to cover up what other workers to some extent have laid bare. The antiquary's lack of interest in the living professional aspect of the

subject is no doubt in some measure to blame. Indeed M. de la Roncière has so far neglected to equip himself for this part of his task, that throughout the work he makes no distinction between strategy and tactics and frequently uses the one word for the other. The fault is also partly due to a certain want of precision in his work. The richest and most illuminating authority on medieval naval warfare is the *Victorial* of Diaz de Gomez, and M. de la Roncière rightly devotes a chapter to it. Yet the inadequacy of his method will be apparent if we consider how he deals with the passage describing the formation of the English fleet in the action off Ambleteuse. The passage as quoted in a note is as follows:—"Ficieron una as á los balleneros mayores é pusieron á los espaldas dos naos grandes é una coca de Alemania é los balleneros pequenos pusieron en medio." On this foundation M. de la Roncière writes thus:—"Les Anglais se formaient en bataille suivant l'ordre traditionnel (of which he has nowhere told us anything) en première ligne les grands baleiniers flanqués sur les ailes de deux gros nefes et d'une coque d'Allemagne; les petits bâtiments étaient placés en soutien." Can this by any stretch of courtesy be called an adequate rendering? The Spanish has nothing about two or more "lines" and nothing about "supports." The real crux of the passage is, like the "herse" at Hastings, what did the author mean by "una as." Yet this is passed over without a word, though an explanation is not far to seek and that a very plausible one and one that excludes the assumption of two or more lines. M. de la Roncière's paraphrase of the concluding sentence, which relates how the vessels took up their stations in the calm, is equally open to objection. "Esto facian" says the original "con los bateles, é aun avia algunos balleneros de remos é de vela." Of this he writes "Faute de vent les bateaux et quelques baleiniers mixtes à rames et à voile remorquèrent les voiliers à leur poste de combat." Yet the original does not say the "ballingers" did the towing. The point of the passage, which M. de la Roncière entirely misses, is that some at least of the "ballingers" were to some extent vessels of free movement, and were able to get into position without being towed. These points may seem minute, but when a passage so rare and invaluable, a true *locus classicus* on which turns the whole question of medieval formations and the whole question of free and subservient movement, is found to be so loosely dealt with, the inevitable effect is seriously to prejudice our confidence in the whole work.

When at last M. de la Roncière brings himself to a serious consideration of material, the same want of precision continues. Towards the end of the volume he attempts to deal with the *Révolution Maritime* which he regards as taking place at the end of the fifteenth century; and here disappointment increases to despair. It is as though we were watching a man hunting for curiosities amongst half-completed excavations and in his eagerness to fill his museum recklessly covering up what the painful labor of others has partially revealed. Indeed after all the work that has been done in his own and other countries there is really no excuse for such a chapter, for instance, as that entitled "Les Vaisseaux." Far

better to have left the subject alone than to have dealt with it so. Take for example the difficult case of the galleon, around the development of which hangs the whole history of the genesis of sailing tactics. In the century or so with which he is dealing the galleon grew from being a modified galley or *mezzo-galera* into the ship of the line. It is hardly too much to say that in form, armament and tactical value galleons of 1475 could differ as much from galleons of 1575 as the steam frigates of the fifties differed from the cruisers of to-day. Yet in the single page which he deems the subject merits he deals vaguely with the galleon of the time and to explain what it was cites at random from authors and examples extending over the whole period as if they were contemporaneous. The same must regretfully be said of his chapter on "L'Artillerie de la Marine." Here again in the period under treatment naval ordnance developed from a crude and impotent infancy up to nearly what it continued to be in Nelson's time, and yet to explain any given nature of gun M. de la Roncière can quote with perfect indifference from authorities extending from the end of the fifteenth century far into the seventeenth. For such work the world is too old and France has given us the right to expect something better from one of her most distinguished scholars.

Still it is pleasant to be able to say that if the defects of the work seem glaring it is partly due to the real excellence of the bulk of it. They become conspicuous by contrast with the ungrudging and persistent labor the writer continues to disclose, the wide range he covers, and the mass of unsuspected sources of information he opens out. For the student of naval history, no matter what his nationality, the book must remain indispensable, a well from which he may draw inexhaustibly, a gazetteer which will seldom fail to direct his steps. Nor can it ever be denied a high place as having rescued from oblivion a teeming mass of history, and as affording a solid contribution to knowledge in a field that has been unaccountably neglected. As special examples of the value of the work may be mentioned the section on Jean de Vienne, on the attempted invasion of England in 1386, on Jacques Cœur, on the maritime policy of Louis XI. with the exploits of Coulon, and on the constitution and jurisdictions of the Four Admiralties; while for those who would study such widely different subjects as for instance the early attempts of France at maritime domination in the Mediterranean and the influence of the sea power on the Wars of the Roses material will be found in equal abundance.

JULIAN S. CORBETT.

The Council of Constance to the Death of John Hus. Being the Ford Lectures delivered in the University of Oxford in Lent Term, 1900. By JAMES HAMILTON WYLIE, M.A. (London: Longmans. 1900. Pp. 192.)

If there was one man of English speech from whom we had a right to hope for a fresh readable book on the Council of Constance, it was Mr. James Hamilton Wylie. For a quarter-century he has been engaged